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Monthly Report Chicago Housing Authority
Issued July 15, 1954

608 South Dearborn Street Chicago 5, Illinois

CHA MOVES FORWARD ON NEW ROCKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD

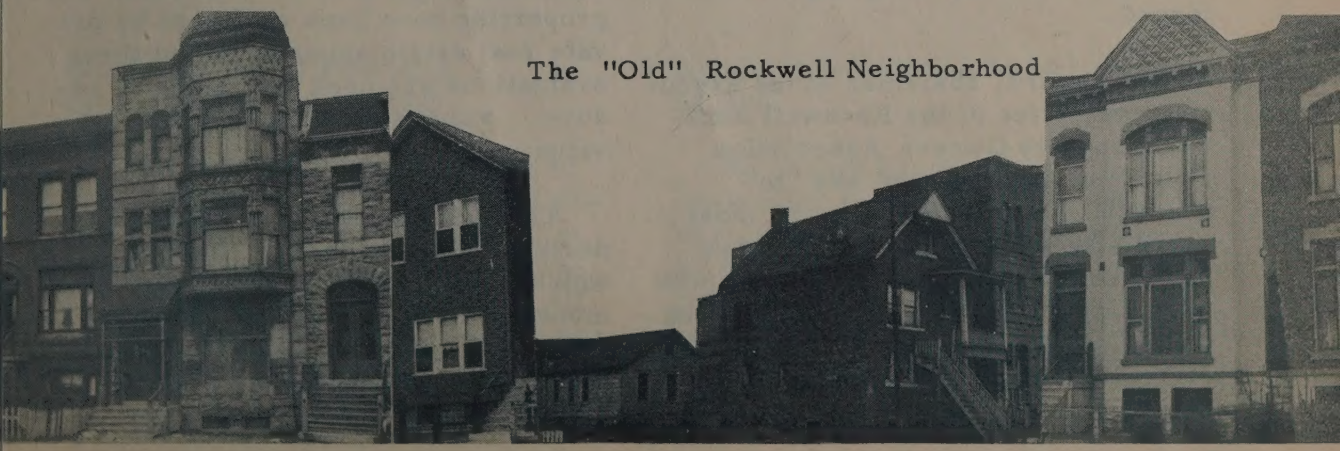
CHA's "New Rockwell" program on the West Side, whose announcement earlier this year gained nationwide attention, is now in action.

On July 1, the Authority opened a field office at 330 South Maplewood Avenue, with John M. Kahlert as development adviser in charge, to work with property owners on renewal of the nine-block neighborhood through new housing and reconditioning of still serviceable residences. Response by the community, though work has just begun, is reported enthusiastic: people are ready and anxious to see the program through.

The CHA Plan

Three-way cooperation by governmental housing agencies, as well as collaboration of the neighborhood residents, lies behind the new Rockwell redevelopment program. Federal assitance is promised for the new public housing, but important key to this promise was the strong initial support by the Illinois State Housing Board. More than a year ago the Board voted confidence in the program by approving use of State funds for it. The Board is financing rehabilitation of existing buildings and much of the preparatory work not eligible for federal aid.

The program, in brief, has three parts: Standard buildings, of which there are about a hundred on the site, will remain in the hands of present owners desiring to join in the improvement efforts. Buildings structurally sound but neglected and overcrowded will be brought up to standard either by present owners or, if the owners wish to sell, by CHA. The Authority will then operate them as rental housing for low-income families. Worn-out buildings will (cont'd on p. 2)



The "Old" Rockwell Neighborhood

John R. Fugard, Chairman Joseph P. Sullivan, Vice Chairman John L. Yancey, Treasurer Samuel N. Katzin Elizabeth Wood, Executive Secretary

be purchased by the Authority, torn down, and replaced with modern apartments.

Community Reactions

These were sample reactions of the community the first week the CHA field office was open:

The owner of one building, which is in top condition, called to make certain the Authority would go forward with its plans. Although her home requires no repairs and is air-conditioned, she wanted assurance of a general neighborhood clean-up before she invests more money to convert her heating plant to gas. Otherwise, she would sell her property and move.

The owner of two buildings, one standard and one in need of reconditioning, put himself on record as being willing to "do anything you people suggest" to improve his properties.

The owner of a 17-apartment building reported that because of advancing years she finds the job of maintaining so large a building a drain on her strength. She is going to turn the property over to her brother who is willing to take on the job of necessary repairs and live in the neighborhood IF good standards are going to be enforced.

Ira Lenard, chairman of the executive committee of the Rockwell Addition Property Owners Association says: "In general, we are impressed with the CHA plan and most especially with the methods as they have been outlined to us. Owners who have kept their properties in good condition feel that their investment will be protected by the rejuvenation of the neighborhood. We are also appreciative of the steps CHA has taken to keep us informed. This has eliminated the fear that many had of waking up to find a steam shovel in their back yards and being told to move out."

"If other old neighborhoods in Chicago can adopt a similar plan," said Mrs. Rachel Ridley, president of the Midwest Community Council, "I believe Chicago can overcome its housing problems."

Land Acquisition

Even owners of properties in the path of new construction are interested in the plans for their neighborhood, according to CHA land acquisition representatives who have been doing preliminary work in the area since May 1st. They see the necessity for demolition in blighted sections, and to date 23 percent have given the Authority options to buy. Many, however, are eager to stay in the neighborhood. CHA has already brought together owners whose buildings are to be torn down and owners of buildings not scheduled for demolition but who wish to leave the neighborhood.

To eliminate uncertainty, the Authority has notified each owner by letter if his property is needed for new building. A representative then calls on him to negotiate terms of sale. All properties have been evaluated by private real estate appraisers and these evaluations are used as a guide to assure owners a sale at fair market value.

Through the efforts of CHA, an elderly couple was saved from a "deal" which would have resulted in a serious monetary loss. A man 92 years old and his 86-year-old wife were talked into selling their home at a price below its value (cont'd on p. 4)

COMPETITION KEEN FOR PROJECT GARDEN AWARDS

Tenants and maintenance staff at CHA housing developments are working overtime to be sure their homes are in "best bib and tucker" and thereby keep their projects in the running for the trophies to be awarded at the Fifth Annual CHA Interproject Festival. This gala celebration, sponsored and managed by the tenants themselves, will be held Sunday, August 8, at Lawndale Gardens, winner of last year's award. In addition to the presentation of trophies there will be a short program featuring interproject talent.

Public is invited to attend

Fifth Annual CHA Interproject Festival

Sunday, August 8th 1-5 P.M.

at

LAWNDALE GARDENS

California Boulevard at 25th St.

Judges have completed the first of two inspection trips to the projects to score the gardening achievements of tenants. Before the Festival, a second inspection will be made, and scores will be averaged to determine the winners of the cups. For presenting the best all-around appearance, projects in the row-house and walk-up apartment building class will compete for the Babette Stiefel Award; those in the elevator apartment building class will vie for the Howard Shaw Cup. The Arch Winning Award will go to the project which has shown the most tenant interest and initiative and the greatest improvement over the previous year.

Judging committee consists of one representative from the Chicago Park District, one from the Salvation Army, one from the Interproject Festival Committee, and two from CHA staff.

INCOME LIMITS FOR ALL CHA HOMES EQUALIZED

CHA Commissioners on June 21 took action to equalize city-state project income limits for admission of families without children with those for federally-financed housing. All CHA projects now accept two-person families with incomes up to $3,100 a year; a three-person family may have $3,300.

No change has been made in the income limit for families with children. For city-state housing this is now $4,000, plus $100 for each minor child. This is about $500 above the admission income in federally-financed housing for families with children.

New Rockwell
(cont'd from p. 2)

to a real estate company whose obvious intention was to make a quick profit at Authority expense. CHA succeeded in having the contract voided and in negotiating a sale at fair value with the aged couple.

Architects Appointed

The architectural firm of Charles W. Nicoll and Associates has been instructed by CHA to prepare plans for the new apartment buildings. High-rise, elevator buildings are being designed to contain 815 apartments. About two months will be required for preparation of preliminary plans. It is expected that 7-, 9-, and possibly 13-story buildings will be proposed. New construction on the site will be undertaken in stages, and the Authority hopes to break ground for the first of the new buildings next Spring.

Reconditioned Units

While new construction will proceed in stages, reconditioning of existing buildings will begin as soon as properties are acquired by CHA or agreements reached with owners wishing to retain their buildings and undertake the repairs themselves. It is expected that the reconditioning process will result in 140 standard dwelling units in buildingswhich are now deteriorating.

Relocation

One of the first tasks of the Authority will be to find homes for people whose buildings are to be torn down. Every resource will be explored. Families with incomes within CHA limits will be given priority for apartments in existing public housing throughout the city. Families ineligible for low-rent housing will be helped to find other living quarters on the private market. No family will be "unhoused" without a place to live.

State Board Cooperation

State money is covering the costs of field office personnel, community organization, and other such preparations. It is also financing inspections, appraisals, acquisition of vacant land, rehabilitation of buildings, and miscellaneous neighborhood improvements on sections of the site where the federal government has no direct interest.

Federal funds, already earmarked for use by CHA, are available under Title III of the Housing Act of 1949, for preliminary financing of the 815 new apartments and the 140 in reconditioned buildings on sections of the site now marked for demolition.

School Addition Under Way

The Board of Education has anticipated the need for new school facilities in the neighborhood and has already built a 20-room addition to the Grant School. This school, at the north end of the New Rockwell site, will accommodate about 1,900 children with the addition, which will be ready this fall.

Plans Acclaimed

The CHA plan for the New Rockwell Neighborhood has been widely acclaimed. John Nystul, assistant FHA commissioner, termed it "the most advanced plan in the country for saving our old neighborhoods." He further predicted that it would set a new national pattern for urban renewal. (cont'd on p. 5)

New Rockwell
(cont'd from p. 4)

Comments of this type together with neighborhood approval are particularly gratifying to CHA in view of strenuous objections voiced when the area was first designated for rebuilding. The City Council, seeking locations for new public housing, approved a site bounded by Madison, Western, Van Buren and the Pennsylvania tracks in August, 1950. The intention was to demolish all buildings in the area and replace them with public housing. Because so many buildings were in good condition, the Rockwell Addition Property Owners Association instituted suit to enjoin the city and CHA from acquiring the properties.

Intensive study of the site by CHA revealed that total demolition would be wasteful. The Authority reduced the size of the site and developed the plan of combining new buildings with rehabilitation and conservation. Consultations with neighborhood groups led to acceptance of the plan, and on June 17, 1954, the pending suit against the Authority was dropped.

OLANDER HOMES -- LESSON IN BROTHERHOOD

The "Let's Get Acquainted" party held at Olander Homes, Oakwood and Lake Park Avenue, on Friday evening, June 18, was a happy occasion for Olander Tenants and an object lesson in brotherhood for all Chicago to ponder.

Tenants at Olander Homes represent some sixteen different nationalities and races. They are all Americans who trace their ancestry from Italy, Poland, Ireland, England, Bohemia, Sweden, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Abyssinia, the Philippine Islands, Switzerland, France, Norway, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Austria. They are Caucasians, Negroes, Filipinos and Asiatics. Some are Protestants, some Roman Catholics, some Jews, and some adhere to Asiatic religions. But they don't dwell on their differences. The important thing is: they are neighbors, and they like each other.

Purpose of the party was to welcome new tenants and to extend a neighborly hand. Non-resident guests were impressed with the spirit of good fellowship as children and adults sang together, played games, and enjoyed refreshments.

ALL CABRINI APARTMENTS TO BE EQUIPPED WITH GAS

All families at Frances Cabrini Homes will in the near future be heating and cooking with gas. The Peoples Gas, Light and Coke Company has informed CHA that the petition for gas service for 349 apartments has been granted, and the Authority is now free to contract for installation. A total of 237 apartments of the 586 in Cabrini Homes had earlier made the transfer from coal heating to gas during the past two years with expressions of pleasure from tenants, who find gas furnaces easier and cleaner to manage.

MORE SOCIAL AGENCIES COLLABORATE WITH CHA

Authority staff was authorized by CHA Commissioners on June 21 to negotiate with Henry Booth House and with the Lower North Community Center for taking over space in two new housing developments to serve as headquarters for community programs. Upon recommendation of the Advisory Committee of the Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, non-profit, Community Fund-supported organizations such as these, can be supplied with space, maintenance and utilities in federally-financed housing developments at $1 a year.

The community building at Harold L. Ickes Homes, which will be ready in the summer of 1955, will provide about 8,000 feet of space for Henry Booth House. This organization, which has operated as a social settlement of the Near West Side since 1898, will carry on a program of education and recreation for adults, young people and children of Ickes Homes, Dearborn Homes, and the surrounding neighborhood. It will provide a nursery school, a library, clubs, and a homemaking counseling service.

The building now occupied by Henry Booth House at 14th Place and Halsted Street is to be torn down to make way for new construction. By moving to Ickes Homes, the settlement will be provided with a large assembly hall for neighborhood gatherings, games, etc., several clubrooms, an office, kitchen, lockers and sanitary facilities. The Authority is happy to have Booth House take charge of community activities in the neighborhood because of its long experience and excellent record of achievement in promoting fellowship, understanding and cooperation among various races and nationalities.

Pending completion of the community building, Booth House staff will continue to operate from its Near West Side headquarters and from such temporary space as may be available at Ickes Homes. Its homemaking counseling project is already in effect for the benefit of tenants moving into the newly opened buildings. Also inaugurated is a group work program at Dearborn Homes.

Plans for Cabrini Extension

Since 1941, the Lower North Center has operated a social settlement for residents of the Near North Side. It has worked tirelessly toward improving recreation, education, health and housing in the densely populated community, but its efforts have been hindered by lack of adequate space.

Architects drawing plans for Cabrini Extension have been instructed by the Authority to include headquarters for a large-scale neighborhood program in the proposed project community building. The housing development is still in the design stage. If preliminary plans for a community program can be made early it will be possible to have a program in full swing by the time tenants are ready to move in.

Park District Cooperation

Residents of the Cabrini Extension area are also promised more park space. The Chicago Park District announces that it plans to develop the land adjacent to Seward Park, which lies next to new project site. Plans are also afoot for the Authority to lease to the Park District certain land at its 35th and State Street site for development. Here the Board of Education also hopes to build a new school. It is possible that a program similar

to the one in effect at Dearborn Homes may be formulated where the park facilities will be available to the school and the neighborhood residents in exchange for headquarters in the school building after school hours for Park District activities. The CHA project community building will be designed to supplement but not duplicate proposed programs of the Board of Education and the Park District.

Cooperation Benefits All

These cooperative activities enhance the benefits each of the agencies has to offer the city's residents and promote economy of operation as well. Social agencies can spend their funds on better services when project community space is available to them. Land and construction costs can be conserved by pooling park and community building space.

ONLY 800 FAMILIES REMAIN IN VETERANS' PROJECTS

CHA's program for closing down its veterans' temporary housing projects took a big step forward in the three-month period ending June 30th. During the spring months, 319 families moved out, leaving only 810 families in residence out of the 3,359 originally occupied in 1946. The number of operating projects has been reduced from 22 to 8, and by September 30, the Authority expects to close down all but two. Ashburn Homes at 29th and Kildare and Sauganash Homes, Foster and Kildare, will probably remain open until some time in 1955.

At Thatcher Homes, Cumberland and Montrose, 138 of the 323 families living there on March 30 have moved elsewhere. Only 19 families remain at Montclare Homes, Wellington and Sayre, and only two are still at the 79th and Tripp location.

The temporary dwellings were erected at the close of the war to serve returning members of the armed forces on land owned by the Chicago Park District, the Board of Education, the Sanitary District and the Forest Preserve. These agencies leased the land to the Authority at $1 a year. Twelve of the original sites have been returned to the owners and three others are currently in process of site restoration.

CHA COMPLETES 2,500 NEW HOMES IN YEAR

CHA completed 2,513 new homes for the city's low-income families in the twelve-month period ended June 30th. In addition, the Authority began construction on the 1,831 additional low-rent homes authorized for building by Congress last summer. In the same twelve months, apartment construction in the city totaled only 3,185 units, according to building permit figures. The 1,831 started by CHA was more than half of the entire volume.

More than 900 of the newly completed CHA units are in two-story row-house dwellings on the outskirts of the city, designed especially for large families. At 44th and Cicero Avenue, 300 new dwellings form an extension to Leclaire Courts, the city-state relocation development completed in 1950. Five hundred new homes were added to the Altgeld Gardens community at 132d and St. Lawrence Avenue,

with the completion of Philip Murray Homes. Governor Frank O. Lowden Homes at 95th and Wentworth opened 128 new homes this Spring.

The 150-unit apartment building at Oakwood and Lake Park Avenue, Victor A. Olander Homes, has become a new landmark for the Near South Side. First-stage construction is finished at three other elevator apartment developments containing a total of 1,435 apartments. These are Grace Abbott Homes at 14th and Laflin, Ida B. Wells Extension, 37th and Vincennes, and Harold L. Ickes Homes, 22d and State Streets.

New Homes to Be Built

In addition to the 2,531 apartments completed and the 1,831 now in building, the Authority has contracted with the federal government for an additional 6,184 low-rent homes.

Included in this figure are the 955 apartments in the New Rockwell Neighborhood (see p. 1). When the current construction of the 595 apartments in first stage of Governor Henry Horner Homes at Lake and Damen is finished, an extension comprising 323 apartments is proposed. Architects have completed about 25 percent of the work involved in preparing plans for the 1,925 apartments at Cabrini Extension on the Near North Side and the acquisition of property is more than half finished.

Holabird & Root & Burgee has been awarded a contract to design the 1,648 unit housing development planned for the 35th and State Street site. It is expected that plans will be completed for the first stage of building -- 1,180 apartments -- in time to permit the Authority to issue constructions bids by March, 1955. More than half the land needed for first-stage building has been optioned and by September it is anticipated that title to all of this portion of the site will have been transferred to the Authority.

The remaining CHA homes under contract are scattered among various smaller sites in the city. In most instances, they will be extensions to existing developments.

ALTGELD COMMUNITY GETS AMBULANCE SERVICE

Fear of accidents and sudden illness will no longer hold so powerful a grip over residents of the Altgeld Gardens-Philip Murray Homes community, as the result of announcement that ambulance service to city hospitals is now available. This much needed service has been supplied through the cooperation of the Advisory Committee of the Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, the Council's Health Committee, the Community Fund, the project's Health Committee.

Medical services for this community of 2,000 families are disturbingly inadequate, but according to recent analysis by the Welfare Advisory Committee, getting patients to hospitals was termed the number one need. There have been deaths that could possibly have been prevented and there have been near deaths that frightened the whole community because medical care was delayed. The coroner's verdict on a young cerebral palsy victim was that death might have been pre-

vented had the patient been hospitalized earlier. One child who died as a result of burns sustained in the home might have lived had there not been so long a delay in getting her to County Hospital.

Within two days after start of the service, the community had two emergencies. A child visitor fell from a swing and seriously injured her head and back. She was promptly taken to County Hospital. In the other instance, a doctor ordered a woman to the hospital. An attempt was made to take her by private car, but she collapsed and the doctor forbade her being moved except by stretcher.

Where the family is in a position to pay, they are expected to take care of the bill; where funds are not available, the charge is paid by the Community Fund through Provident Hospital. Arrangements for calling the ambulance are made through the management office where someone is on duty 24 hours a day.

CHA RELOCATION PROGRESS FOR THREE-MONTH PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30, 1954

	Original Family Count	Families Relocated this Quarter	Families Remaining in CHA-owned Buildings	Total Families Remaining on Site
TOTAL	10,129	394	1,203	5,407
Prairie Ave. Cts.	309	1	12	12
Michael Reese Site /a	453	-	C L E A R E D	
ckes Homes-Stage I	66	-	C L E A R E D	
ckes Homes-Stage II	441	-	C L E A R E D	
Abbott Homes-Stage I	609	-	C L E A R E D	
Abbott Homes-Stage II	821	-	C L E A R E D	
Wells Ext.-Stage I	469	-	C L E A R E D	
Wells Ext.-Stage II	463	-	C L E A R E D	
Cabrini Ext.-Stage I	1,546	44	632	1,164
Cabrini Ext.-Balance	1,190	24	305	1,133
New Rockwell Neighborhood	855	-	-	855
35th & State-Stage I	889	179	175	628
35th & State-Stage II	800	-	-	800
Horner Homes-Stage I	318	110	1	1
Horner Homes-Stage II	592	18	64	575
Prairie Ave. Cts. Ext.	161	-	-	161
Olander Homes Ext.	60	-	-	60
46th & Princeton-Stage I /b	43	9	C L E A R E D	
46th & Princeton-Stage II /b	44	9	14	18

/a Rebuilding by Michael Reese Hospital.
/b Rebuilding by Chicago Dwellings Association.

Chicago Housing Authority
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Chicago 5, Illinois

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LET'S GET ACQUAINTED. . . Tenants at Victor A. Olander Homes enjoy a game of cards at party held June 18th. Brotherhood is practiced year-around at Olander where tenants represent sixteen nationalities and many races and religions. (See story p. 5).

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CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY DEVELOPMENTS

COMPLETED - 26 Developments - 12,390 Dwellings

1. Jane Addams Houses	(F)	1,027	14. Leclaire Courts	(C-S)
2. Julia C. Lathrop Homes	(F)	925	15. Racine Courts	(C-S)
3. Trumbull Park Homes	(F)	462	16. Ogden Courts	(C-S)
4. Ida B. Wells Homes	(F)	1,658	17. Prairie Ave. Cts. -I-II	(C-S)
5. Frances Cabrini Homes	(F)	586	18. Archer Courts	(C-S)
6. Robert H. Brooks Homes	(F)	834	19. Loomis Courts	(C-S)
7. Bridgeport Homes	(F)	141	20. Philip Murray Homes	(F)
8. Lawndale Gardens	(F)	128	21. Victor A. Olander Homes	(F)
9. Altgeld Gardens	(F)	1,499	22. Leclaire Courts Ext.	(F)
10. Wentworth Gardens	(F)	422	23. Grace Abbott Homes-I	(F)
11. Dearborn Homes	(F)	800	24. Ida B. Wells Extension-I	(F)
12. Maplewood Courts	(C-S)	132	25. Harold L. Ickes Homes-I	(F)
13. Harrison Courts	(C-S)	126	26. Gov. Frank O. Lowden Homes	(F)

UNDER CONSTRUCTION - 5 Developments - 1,859 Dwellings

17. Prairie Ave. Cts. -III	(C-S)	28	25. Harold L. Ickes Homes-II	(F)
23. Grace Abbott Homes-II	(F)	570	27. Gov. Henry Horner Homes-I	(F)
24. Ida B. Wells Extension-II	(F)	195		

IN DESIGN AND LAND PURCHASE STAGE - 7 Developments - 6,192 Dwellings

17. Prairie Ave. Cts. -IV	(C-S)	8	30. Madison & Western	(F)
27. Gov. Henry Horner Homes-II	(F)	325	31. Prairie Ave. Cts. Ext.	(F)
28. 35th & State	(F)	1,648	32. Olander Homes Ext.	(F)
29. Cabrini Extension	(F)	1,925	33. Other Units Under Contract	(F)

VETERANS TEMPORARIES - 8 Sites - Demountables and Others (C-F)

(F) Financed with federal funds; (C-S) city and state funds; and (C-F) city and federal fun